

showcasing their technologies. On efficiency: We should drill and mine energy efficiency the way we are so glut-tionously dependent on drilling for oil and mining for coal. On renewable energy: We should invest in sustainable energy and new technologies to build our energy independence and to once again create American manufacturing jobs.

I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming this year's participants at the expo and encourage my colleagues to stop by the Cannon Caucus Room to see the exhibits.

TIME TO MAKE A PERMANENT FIX TO THE MEDICARE PAYMENT FORMULA

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves up against another deadline for the so-called "doc fix," and this happens because this Congress lacks the courage to solve the problem. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, the longer we put off doing a permanent fix, the more expensive it gets. If the problem had been fixed 5 years ago, it would have cost \$49 billion.

Here is an ad that the AMA has been running in some of the papers here on Capitol Hill. The cost to fix the bill now is \$210 billion, but if we wait 3 years, it almost doubles to \$396 billion and then balloons to half a trillion dollars in 5 years.

But there is a better way. H.R. 3693 would make a permanent fix to the formula Medicare uses to determine payments to doctors, and it's critical for our patients because patients cannot get access to a Medicare physician because, consider this, Medicare physician payment rates are about where they were in 2001. Medical practice costs have increased more than 20 percent. What's worse, the current fee pays doctors less each year for performing the same procedures.

I urge the Congress to pass a reasonable Medicare physician fix. The time has come and gone.

FINANCIAL GAMES

(Mr. GARAMENDI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I'm astounded. I'm astounded with what I just heard. This is a problem that was actually created nearly a decade ago by the Republicans as they were playing financial games. And to stand here on the floor and say this has to be fixed now, yes, indeed it does, but indeed it is the Republican Party that has prevented us from fixing it. That's going on right now as the negotiations take place on the American Jobs Act and corporate tax loophole closing—closing the tax loopholes on corporations that are in fact shipping jobs offshore.

I would ask the Republicans in this House to stand with us and do a permanent fix. It can be done. But it's not going to be easy. We need to raise the tax revenue. A good place to raise it is from those corporations that are shifting jobs offshore.

NATIONAL GUARD SENT TO BORDER OR MAYBE NOT

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the administration announced they're deploying 1,200 National Guard troops to the border. That sounds mighty good, but not so fast.

It appears troops aren't really going to the border. It seems they're sending the National Guard troops 20 miles behind the border to do computer support work. Well, we can hire a Geek Squad to do that. The National Guard troops need to be on the border and they need to be armed so they can defend themselves. And they need realistic rules of engagement.

One border patrol official said that sending unarmed National Guard troops to the border amounts to the border patrol guarding the National Guard. Our current border philosophy is to try to capture people when they cross the border. Once they've crossed, if we capture them, then we have to deal with the consequences—like deportations, prosecutions, drug gangs in our jails, et cetera. Why are we letting illegals cross in the first place?

It seems to me we need boots on the border, not 20 miles behind the border guarding computers.

And that's just the way it is.

BUY AMERICA

(Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, in the last year of the Bush administration, the Department of Defense, under President Bush, authorized a 450 percent increase in the number of waivers we grant to this Nation's Buy America law, allowing in just 1 year thousands of American jobs to be sent overseas using U.S. taxpayer dollars.

We have the defense reauthorization bill on the floor this week, and we have a chance to say no more, that one of the best ways to grow our domestic economy is to make sure that our own U.S. taxpayer dollars, 70 percent of which are used with respect to U.S. procurement on defense items, stay right here in this country.

The stimulus bill is working. It's creating American jobs. But without spending one dime more of American money, we can stop this trend of more and more waivers being granted to the Buy America laws and apply U.S. taxpayer dollars to create U.S. jobs.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POLIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

SENIORS' BILL OF RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an issue of concern to seniors in my district and around the country. I'm proud to support the Seniors' Bill of Rights crafted by the Democrats' Seniors Task Force, and am committed to its goals. These goals include helping seniors achieve financial security by staying in their homes, finding jobs, and receiving quality, affordable health care.

Our seniors made this country what it is today—fighting overseas for our freedom, serving as the backbone for an economic boom in the post-war years, and providing critical leadership in our communities.

Today, I want to address a fundamental flaw in the Social Security system that I want to correct in the coming weeks: Social Security disability fraud. We are all aware of the disability backlog and the steps Congress is taking to reduce it. Due to dedicated oversight and strong action since the Democrats took back the majority in Congress, the backlog is being reduced. What is less commonly known is that some disability insurers are purposely adding to this backlog.

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They have forced policyholders to apply for Social Security disability benefits or else they withhold payments. They do this even when they know the person is ineligible for Social Security disability benefits.

Here is where the fraud comes in. Disability insurance pays out when you are hurt and unable to perform your job. Social Security is there when you are so hurt that you cannot perform any job.

If a neonatal nurse, for example, injures her shoulder in a car accident and can no longer pick up infants, she can no longer do her job and is eligible for temporary disability benefits from her insurer. Because this nurse is still capable of serving a full career as a nurse in a number of other settings, she is not eligible for Social Security disability.

This isn't a hypothetical situation. It is an actual case pulled from a lawsuit against one of the disability insurers that was defrauding Social Security.

The disability insurer forced the nurse to commit fraud by forcing her to apply for Social Security disability, even though they knew the full extent of her injuries still meant that she